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A HISTORY OF PHOENIX HIGH SCHOOL

by

THE CLASS OF 1951

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INTRODUCTION

It has been a long time since the first class of Phoenix High School started in September 1909. Many students of the class of '51 remember their parents conversing about the school in its earlier days. It is interesting to contrast parents' memories with the program of today. An innumerable number of changes, varying widely in type and kind, have occurred since that time.

In the course of forty-two years, from the origin of Phoenix High School up to the present time, many students will long be remembered for their ability in various fields of activity. Phoenix athletic teams have established better than average records in every sport. Many students have gained new objectives in the scholastic field. All in all we can see that Phoenix High has progressed rapidly since its establishment in 1909.

Our high school has occupied three different buildings. At its beginning it occupied the building now known as "The Shack". In 1923 the school moved into the building which is the present grade school. Then in 1949 we moved to the new school, which is modern in every sense of the word. The new gymnasium is much larger than the old one and has a greater seating capacity due to built in bleachers. Our gratitude

goes out to the tax-payers, the school board and to the contractors and architect for our new high school and its many time-saving conveniences.

Phoenix High will long be remembered by its students as a place where not only "book-learning" but leadership and character were acquired. Some students from Phoenix have made marks for themselves in the world today, and of course every student receiving a diploma at Phoenix has hopes and ambitions of making a success of himself.

In putting together this History of Phoenix High School, we, the class of 1951, have done a lot of work. Compiling facts for the various chapters has involved great effort. Many hours have been spent pouring over old yearbooks and interviewing former students. All the tedious labor put into the making of the paper is rewarded by the sense of a job well done. We are happy to know that many individuals will be pleased with our effort in presenting this paper. We, therefore, count it a privilege to be chosen to put this paper together. Those who volunteered for extra work in typing and setting up the stencil also should have credit for their extra work.

For relating the history of this school to those who have an interest in it we have undertaken such a project,

CHAPTER I

ACTIVITIES

The first musical program presented by Phoenix High School was held March 7, 1917. It was an operetta entitled "The Japanese Girl" and was presented by the Glee Club. The Glee Club was composed of seventh and eighth grade and high school girls. There was a band and orchestra in 1916 and 1917, but during the depression the music program was curtailed.

In 1938, an instructor was hired solely for the purpose of teaching music. At that time there were twenty-one people in the orchestra and seventeen in the band.

The first high school chorus was organized in 1932, but it was not until 1938 that a regular course in Glee Club was taught.

In 1946-47, a string ensemble was organized but was discontinued in 1949.

In 1949 Phoenix hired a full-time music instructor for the high school and grade school. There was mixed chorus that year composed of sixty students.

This school year, 1950-51, girls' chorus, band, and orchestra were offered as regular credit courses. Under the direction of the music instructor, a Christmas program and spring concert were presented to the public.

Dramatics

The first dramatics club, organized in 1915, was called the "Thesspians". Members put on the first high school play, the "Perplexing Situation", on December 3, 1915. The funds brought in by the first few plays were divided among the different organizations, such as the Yearbook, and individual classes.

In 1916-1917, some improvements were made on the stage in the old auditorium. However, this auditorium was torn down in 1924. The new building was named "Memorial Hall" in memory of the Phoenix boys who had served in World War I. This hall had more seating capacity and a bigger and better stage.

In 1947 the first regular dramatics club since the "Thesspians", was organized. This new organization was given the name "Masquers". Since we now have this new club, members for class plays can be selected from the four different classes instead of one.

Since its organization, the "Masquers" has produced two plays a year; one for the benefit of the Junior Class and one for the Senior Class.

Yearbook

In the school year 1915-1916 Phoenix High School became a standard four year institution, and during this year the students produced their first yearbook. This was called "The Blue and White". It was printed by the Medford

Printing Company, which at the present time publishes the "Medford Mail Tribune". This first annual consisted of thirty-eight printed and photographed pages, including the student body, faculty, school history, class news, sports, dramatics, school yells and jokes. There was no advertisement in this annual.

The second "Blue and White" was published in 1917. This was similar to the first but was a little larger.

Because of the lack of finances there was not another annual published until 1925. This book was known as the "Laurel". It was similar to those previously printed. There were four pages of advertisements within the fifty pages of the annual.

After the annual of 1925 there was not another publication until 1938. Although at times production of the yearbook was found to be difficult, production has continued to the present day. The 1951 "Laurel" is a big improvement over the first yearbook of 1916.

Newspaper

As early as February 1922, the students of Phoenix High School were publishing a newspaper. This paper was called the "Blue and White" and was in existence until 1936. The purpose of this paper was to give the community an idea of what was going on in the school, and to give the students training in writing news items, and experience in arranging and managing a paper. This paper was eight inches by eleven

inches, contained four pages, and was supported financially in two ways. It was sold to the public for five cents a copy or thirty cents a semester. Advertising space was sold at the rate of twenty five cents for two and one half inches.

In 1956, the "Blue and White" was replaced by the "Press Box", but, unfortunately, only one copy of this paper was published.

The first "Phoenician" was published in 1937, and contained six pages. In 1950 it was decided that the paper would be mimeographed to cut the cost of publishing. The "Phoenician" is still in existence today.

Parent-Teacher Association

Although a Parent-Teachers' Association did exist in Phoenix in 1917, there is little obtainable information on this first organization.

However, the P. T. A. was reorganized in December 1943. Mrs. A. E. Stevens was elected president. The remainder of the year was spent in learning the objects and aims of the newly formed organization.

During the summer months the P. T. A. undertook the job of canning fruit and vegetables for the school hot lunch program. Along with other projects, they raised enough money to buy band uniforms for the school.

"P" Club

This club was first organized in 1943 under the name "Lettermen's Club". This club is composed of the athletic lettermen of the school.

The organization regulates the wearing of the "P", restricts the display of "foreign" letters, recommends team members for major and minor awards, and assists in keeping up the moral of the teams.

During the war years the club sponsored several paper drives at the school.

In 1947 the club was reorganized under the name of "P" Club. To become a member, one had to earn a letter in some sport.

In 1948 a new constitution was added, giving the coach the right to award the letters.

Girls' Athletic Association

The Girls' Athletic Association was organized in the year 1937-38 upon the request of the high school girls. In 1940-41 they formed a drill team, raising money during the year for uniforms. The team consisted of twenty eight girls, including three majorettes. The policy of the club was, and is, to award letters and numerals for points earned in various sports.

Pep Club

In the school year 1939-40, the Pep Club was organized

by the yell leaders of Phoenix High School. It was a very active club that year, sponsoring several school functions. It consisted of twenty five members.

The following year a drill team with four majorettes was organized by the Pep Club. They raised money for uniforms. During the years, 1945, 1946, and 1947, there was no active Pep Club or drill team.

However, in 1948 the Pep Club was reorganized. For several years it has been a major activity at Phoenix High School.

Junior Red Cross

The Phoenix High School Chapter of the Junior Red Cross was first organized in the year 1947-48; however, it wasn't a chartered chapter until the fall of 1948.

During the club's existence the members made several gifts for the veterans at Camp White Hospital. They also donated their time and talent to help entertain the patients.

The club was very active in 1949-50, sending delegates to conventions throughout the state.

Junior Red Cross was dropped in the school year of 1950-51.

Future Homemakers of America

The Future Homemakers of America was first organized in Phoenix High School in 1949. It was organized in conjunction with the new Home Economics Department and had a very

large all-girl membership. The purpose of the club was to acquaint girls with the basic principles of home management.

Camera Club

This is one of the newest clubs in Phoenix High School, having been organized in the fall of 1949. It was given a very appropriate name, "Shutterbugs".

Membership has increased somewhat since the club's beginning. The membership now includes twenty students.

In 1949 the members of the club had the privilege of entering "The National High School Photo Contest". The year's activities included a photograph exhibition, the students displaying their pictures in downtown business concerns.

Dues are collected from each member, and then the money is used for buying materials with which to develop pictures.

The club is important as a means of arousing student interest in photography as a hobby and profession.

National Honor Society

The Phoenix High School Chapter of the National Honor Society was organized February 12, 1951. At this time, a ceremony was held to induct the charter members.

The object of the Honor Society is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate the desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage development of character in pupils of the school.

CHAPTER II

SPORTS

The history of basketball in Phoenix High School goes all the way back to 1913, the first game being played in that year. No record can be found for the teams of 1913, 1914, and 1915.

In 1916 the team, under coach Herbert Mathews, won thirteen games and lost one. The one defeat was inflicted by Grants Pass. The Phoenix Pirates won the County Championship that year.

In 1917 they again took the County Championship, winning all but one game; this was lost to Medford by one point.

It wasn't until 1925 that Phoenix again won the Jackson County Championship. This was done by winning nine games and losing five.

The year 1930 again saw the pennant fly over Phoenix for winning their fourth County Championship.

Phoenix was again crowned County Champion in 1932 and again in 1933, also winning second in the Southern Oregon Normal School Tournament.

The record books in 1936 again saw Phoenix become Jackson County Champion.

Third place in the Southern Oregon Normal School Tournament was the best the team could do in 1937.

Phoenix won three games and lost seven in the 1939 season, but they won second place in the S.O.N.S. Tournament.

In 1940 they won six and lost thirteen games.

In 1941 they lost all but one game. This was a win over Eagle Point.

The season of 1942 saw the team take second in the Western League division, winning five games and losing five. The league was divided because of the transportation difficulties.

The league was again divided in 1942. Under Coach Bill Emigh the team won the Southern Oregon Invitational tournament.

Coach Floyd Barrett's team of 1944 won one game and lost nine games. A year later, Coach Rice's team did little better, winning one and losing six games.

In 1946 the team did better, winning four and losing four games. Eleven games won and six lost was the season record in 1947, but they took fourth place in the S.O.C.E. tournament.

The 1948 record was not quite as good as the previous year. The team had eight wins and six losses, but they won the Championship in the S.O.C.E. Tournament.

Coach George Sanders coached his team to thirteen victories and nine losses and second place in the conference in 1949.

Jack Woodward took over the coaching helm in 1950 and his team won eight and lost twelve.

The red letter year in Phoenix High basketball was 1951. They won eighteen and lost five. This year they added the State Championship trophy to their already large collection.

In the basketball league Phoenix has won seven County Championships and one State Championship. This is an excellent record.

Track

Before 1917 there was very little organized track, with only one or two meets a year. Phoenix did not achieve prominence in these, seldom placing.

Track was dropped during the next ten years, but in 1925 Phoenix won its first track trophy for first place in Jackson County.

Only seven men went out for track in 1938, but, even so, Phoenix took second place behind Jacksonville in the county meet.

Again in 1939 only a few turned out and again Phoenix won second place. Several students went to the district meet, but did not place.

There was no track in 1940, and in 1941 no one from Phoenix placed in the events. A total of eighteen points was made all year.

From 1942 to 1946 there were no track teams in Phoenix. When track was taken up again in 1947, Coach John Chamberlain

and the team made all of their own equipment.

Four members of the team went to the state meet in 1948. In 1949 and 1950 Phoenix did fairly well in track.

In 1951 Phoenix did well in track, and took second place in the Jackson County meet. They also captured fourth place in the district meet, and four of the team members went to the State meet.

Baseball

Baseball was organized at Phoenix High School in 1924, and although it was one of the earliest sports to be organized, did not achieve prominence for a number of years. In 1938 the team, under Coach Ralph Michener, tied for the Jackson County Championship by winning eight games and losing one. In the play-off game Talent won with a score of 4 to 3.

Phoenix won two games and lost four in 1939. To those who witnessed the team at work that year, there was a pleasant surprise in the good pitching of Howard Ferns.

There was no baseball team in 1940. In 1941 Phoenix defeated Talent and Ashland, and then lost twice to Jacksonville and once to Talent and Medford. Dwight Catherwood was coaching. Next year Phoenix broke even, winning three and losing three.

The Pirate team of 1943 won four games and lost two. Due to illness, Coach Bill Emigh resigned after the first game and Mr. Floyd Barrett took over. The next year Coach Barrett had only one letterman in a squad of fourteen. That

Football season opened in 1940 with a jamboree at Medford with all the other Jackson County six man teams participating. Coach Dwight Catherwood coached the team to two wins and three losses.

In 1941 the football season was highlighted with a very colorful football jamboree at Medford. Coach Catherwood's team won three and lost two games this year.

In 1942 the third annual football jamboree marked one of the most successful seasons in six-man "B" league competition. Coach Bill Emigh's team emerged with three wins and two losses.

In the year of '43, Phoenix High did not have a football team.

The year 1944 saw Phoenix, under the coaching of Coaches Kipp, Lindley, and Rice, lose seven and win none.

In 1945 Phoenix won one and lost six under the coaching of Rice.

In 1946 the Pirates won two and lost four games. The coaching was done by Coach John Chamberlain.

In 1947 the team had a very successful season, winning three, tying two, and losing two games. Phoenix had a new coach that year, Mr. George Sanders.

Nineteen forty-eight was the first year eleven-man football was played at Phoenix. The Pirates won one, tied one, and lost four games. Again this year the Coach was Mr. George Sanders.

In 1940 Phoenix had a new coach, Jack Woodward. The team won three, tied one, and lost four games. The team won the Jackson County Class "B" Championship, and entered the District playoffs, but lost.

Under the coaching of Jack Woodward, the Phoenix Pirates won six and lost one game in the 1950 season. They won the District Championship title by defeating Merrill, of Klamath County, 33-19. Although they lost out in the State Quarter-Finals, Phoenix had added new laurels to its football crown by winning the County B District Championship.

Girls Sports

Girls sports had an early beginning at Phoenix High School, for by 1914 girls' basketball and track teams were a well established part of the athletic program.

By 1925, fifteen girls were turning out for basketball, and that year the team played eight games, winning four games, tying one, and losing three. The other two important girls sports that year were baseball and track.

The year 1938 found the girls playing tennis with other county schools in addition to their other sports activities.

The girls were active in three new sports in 1941. These sports included volleyball, ping-pong, and hiking.

The Phoenix chapter of the Girls Athletic Association went hiking, swimming, skating and bowling in 1944. They also played volleyball and basketball games.

Nineteen forty-eight found the members of the Girls' Athletic Association playing baseball, basketball, tennis and volleyball. The following year found the girls with a very good tennis team.

In addition to their volleyball and basketball games in 1951, the girls won many points for such worthwhile activities as hiking, bicycling, tennis, roller skating, skiing, swimming, tumbling, and horseback riding.

Girls sports now have an important and worthy place in the athletic program of Phoenix High School and hold great promise for the future. With the girls becoming increasingly sports minded, the results can only be advantageous.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

In September of 1909, the doors of Phoenix High School were opened to nine students. The subjects taught were algebra, general history, English, and bookkeeping.

In 1911 a tenth grade was added to the ninth. In that year there were three new subjects added. They were Latin, physical geography, and geometry.

Botany and civics were new subjects offered in 1912.

Five new courses were added to the curricula in 1913. They were manual training, domestic art, science, English history, and literature.

Phoenix became a four year high school in 1915. At that time there were thirty-six pupils. Typewriting, shorthand, and physics were new courses added.

In the year 1924, the subjects offered were Latin, English, algebra, shorthand, American history, modern and medieval history, botany, arithmetic, and geometry.

Again, in 1926, the course of study expanded to include many new subjects. Algebra, geometry, United States History, civics, sociology, geography, English, Latin, science, biology, typewriting, shorthand, and bookkeeping were taught.

Music, which at that time consisted of the Band and Orchestra, was taught for the first time at Phoenix High in 1929. This year was also the first for regular physical education classes.

Chorus was added to the music course in 1930.

In 1936 mechanical drawing, commercial geography, social economics, public speaking, home economics, and general mathematics were new subjects available to the students.

Personal and business relations was first taught in 1940. Since 1946 courses in chemistry and physics have been taught alternately each year.

Art and Spanish were begun in the fall of 1948.

Shop classes in woodworking were begun in the fall of 1949.

This year, 1950-51, a wide variety of subjects are offered. The curricula includes general mathematics, algebra, geometry, elementary science, biology, physics, world geography, world history, United States History, social economics, shorthand, typing, bookkeeping, Spanish, art, chorus, band, orchestra, physical education, and shop.

Faculty

One of the earliest educators of Phoenix was Judge Orange Jacobs. Later, he left and became a jurist in Washington; then he served as Chief Justice.

From 1909 to 1911 there was a principal-teacher, Mr. G. A. Stannard. At this time the Board of Education included

Mr. A. S. Furry, Mr. S. S. Stevens, and Mr. Andrew Hearn.

In 1911, the high school was held on the third floor, "The Auditorium", of the school house. Mr. F. W. Roberts was the principal and teacher this year.

Between 1912 and 1915 Phoenix added two teachers to the faculty. In 1912 Mister Ager became principal.

From 1915 to 1918, Mr. H. H. Mathews was principal. In 1916 Miss Susanne Holmes came from Douglas High School, Alaska, where she had been principal. In 1920, Miss Holmes left Phoenix High School to become Jackson county school superintendant. At this same time three teachers were added to the faculty.

In 1918, Mister Mathews left and Mister Miliam became principal. He was principal until 1923.

In 1923 six weeks tests were introduced. After the pupils became used to them they did not mind them. From 1923 to 1925, Mr. Jno. W. Kerns was principal.

Mr. E. Avarð Whitman returned to Phoenix High School, as a school administrator. He had formerly taught at Phoenix during the school years of 1921-1922. Mr. Whitman was principal from 1925-1936. In 1936 he left to go into college work. At present Mr. Whitman is registrar at Linfield college in McMinnville.

From 1936 to 1940 Mr. R. A. Reedy was principal. During his administration, the music department was developed. The head of the music department was Mr. Harry Myers. Mister Myers was with Phoenix High School from 1940 to 1948.

From 1940 to 1944, Mister Floyd Barrett was principal.

During the period from 1944 to 1947, Mr. Lyle Lindley made several changes at Phoenix High School. He was known as "L-3".

In 1947, Mr. Donald E. Hembre became principal. In 1948 three new districts consolidated with Phoenix. (Districts No. 24, North Phoenix; No. 15, Independence; No. 99, Fern Valley.) In 1949 Mister Hembre became the first principal who was freed from classroom duties.

In 1951 Wagner Creek voted to consolidate with Phoenix High.

Our present superintendant (1951) is Mr. Ernest James.

CHAPTER IV

PHYSICAL PLANT

In September 1909 a one year high school program was begun in Phoenix. There were nine students in attendance who met in the eighth grade room of the present elementary school.

The building was a three story brick and cement structure. The third floor was of wood construction. This served as an auditorium where many plays and other events were held. The first floor served as a heating plant and fuel storage room. Classrooms were located on the second floor.

During the 1911-1912 school year the tenth grade was added, making it a two year high school.

In the year 1913-1914, during the fourth year of the high school's existence, the eleventh grade was added to the tenth. The classes were now held on the first floor of the building.

In the year 1914-1915 the twelfth grade was added, making Phoenix a standard four year high school. The new high school, now known as the shack, was purchased from the Christian Church.

The next big change in the physical plant was made in 1928. The third floor auditorium was removed from the main

building, because it was a fire hazard. The lighting was poor and heating was expensive and inadequate.

At the same time an attractive brick and cement structure similar to the original two story building was added to the west end for class rooms.

The Shack

In 1914-1915, during the sixth year of high school, the Christian Church sold a small building to the school system, it being added to the Phoenix physical plant. It was shingled and a large room was added on the west end; thus making it a three room structure.

Today, thirty-six years later, the bungalow is no longer used as a part of the educational system. Due to the increase of students, it has been remodeled into a well organized lunchroom for both the grade school and the high school.

The shack achieved its name from the Phoenix boys and girls.

The Old Gym

Ten years after sports events were started, it was decided that a new gymnasium should be constructed. A meeting concerning this was held on September 10, 1923. Only ten members were present; therefore the vote was unsatisfactory. However, on October 19th of the same year, public opinion made the vote carry.

The question was brought up whether the building should be erected of wood or concrete. A wooden structure would be much cheaper, but a fire caused a drastic loss of a previous Jackson County gym. Consequently, it was decided to build a concrete structure. The entire building was to be 80 feet by 50 feet and 18 feet from the floor to the ceiling. The actual playing floor was to be 66 feet by 41 feet.

On November 2, 1923, Mr. Lockwood, the contractor, started building the gym. The first load of lumber was delivered on that day. The building was to be ready for use by January 15, 1924.

Labor and cash were donated by the public. The final cost of the building was \$7,700 which was \$2,700 more than the estimated cost. Donations made the added cost possible.

April 5, 1924, the building was completed, and, under the name Phoenix Memorial Hall, was dedicated by Porter J. Neff, to the boys from Phoenix who were in World War I. It was the first modern concrete gymnasium in the Rogue Valley.

New High School

The construction of the new high school building was started in June of 1949. Robert Kaency was the architect, and the Phoenix School Board did its own contracting. Ausland and Dodson were the chief constructors. The bond issue, which was sold to the First National Bank of Portland and Blythe and Company was for \$252,000. Although the cost of

both the gym and high school building went over the amount, the school board was able to save the district a great sum of money. The final cost for the high school building was \$190,000. Roy Bolz sold the sixteen acres of land to the district for \$8,380. A bulldozer cleared this land of trees for thirty-five dollars. The building is near the city limits of Phoenix and can be seen from Highway 99, which is only one-eighth mile away.

By the first of December, 1949, the school was ready for classes. The building is an attractive one story, "L" shaped structure of frame construction, being stuccoed on the outside and plastered inside. There is a spacious hall with a row of rooms on each side. Windows extend from the ceiling to within 3 feet of the floor on both the east and west sides. In addition, the roof is extended so a row of windows is exposed from the east side of the west rooms.

It has the largest shop room in the history of the high school and is very well equipped. It also has a well equipped Home Economics room and large study hall. One room has a platform for speech and dramatics classes.

The floor is covered with asphalt tile. Green blackboards and yellow chalk are used instead of the black blackboards and white chalk because it is easier on the eyes. The water supply for the school comes from a well sunk on the west side of the school building. The total cost of the desks and other equipment was \$9,036.

The school has florescent lights with shading on them. The building has never been officially dedicated.

The New Gymnasium

On March 30, 1949, a meeting was held for the purpose of approving a bond issue for \$252,000.00 for the construction of the new high school and gymnasium.

A month later, May 4, 1949, the bonds were sold and purchased jointly by Blythe and Company and the First National Bank of Portland.

The Board of Education secured the services of the Robert J. Keeney Company, a well known architectural firm. The actual architect work was done by Mr. Fred Johnson of the firm.

The building contract was awarded to the Ausland and Dodson Company on a fixed fee basis. This construction firm began work on July 1, 1949.

The gymnasium was the only one of its type in the Rogue River Valley with the exception of the Southern Oregon College gymnasium. It was built almost entirely of concrete construction with a wooden ceiling and floor. Huge concrete buttresses on the sides of the building were constructed to hold the weight of the rounded roof. The direct weight of the ceiling was held by several enormous crescent shaped laminated beams. One of the most difficult jobs was that of swinging the beams into place, as they were delivered completely constructed from the factory.

On the north side of the gymnasium the stage was built. It was of sufficient size to allow an ample amount of space off stage. The ceiling is of sufficient height to allow stage settings to be raised completely out of sight, thus making it possible to produce plays or operettas with more than one stage setting.

On the south side of the gymnasium, slightly below the playing floor, the boys dressing rooms were built, with accommodations for both home and visiting teams. The spectators' seats were built above the dressing rooms, providing a good view of the playing floor and stage. The entire wall back of the spectators' section is of glass. This wall of windows, facing the south, makes the most of winter light and cuts down glare.